News release

9 November 2007

Highest storm surge for decades

Accurate and consistent forecasts from the Met Office helped the Environment Agency and emergency services take decisive action, after England's east coast experienced one of the highest storm surges and tides for several decades.

Meanwhile, studies of climate change at the Met Office Hadley Centre suggest that in the future the height of coastal floods is likely to increase, potentially causing more damage.

The East Anglian coast bore the brunt of the flooding, with some rivers and the Broads also affected. In Lowestoft, Suffolk, the surge peaked at 2.1 metres between 3 a.m. and 4 a.m., 0.7 metres above the alert level for the town. In Sheerness, Kent, the surge peaked at 2.4 metres between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m.

The storm surge was one of the highest since the 1953 east coast floods, which claimed hundreds of lives. It was fortunate that the recent surge did not coincide with high tide times.

Comparison of Surge recorded in 1953, 1983 and 2007

Port	1953 Max Surge	1953 Highest Water ODN	1983 Max Surge	1983 Highest Water ODN	2007 Max Surge	2007 Highest Water ODN	Highest recorded Surge *
Immingham	1.98m	4.51m	1.53m	4.64m	1.65m	3.99m	2.43m (1989)
Lowestoft	2.74m	3.35m	1.84m	2.82m	2.13m	2.63m	2.74m (1953)
Sheerness	2.74m	4.69m	2.27m	3.90m	2.39m	3.46m	3.50m (1921)

* Highest recorded surge that the Met Office has on record.
ODN Ordnance Datum Newlyn

More about the Storm Tide Forecast Service

More about North Sea storm surges

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